

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY UPDATE

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1. California Water Action Plan – Implementation Report

The California Water Action Plan – released by Governor Brown in January 2014 – is the Administration’s roadmap for “the first five years of the state’s journey toward sustainable water management,” beginning in January 2014. A review of state agency actions throughout 2014 shows that more than 100 efforts furthering the Water Action Plan were either continued or initiated. This report details the origins of the Water Action Plan, highlights achievements to date, and outlines activities for the next four years.

http://resources.ca.gov/california_water_action_plan/

2. Water Bond – Proposition 1

AB 1471 (Rendon), after being passed by both houses and signed by Governor Brown in August, went on the November 2014 ballot as Proposition 1.

Proposition 1 was passed by the voters with 67.1% voting in favor of the measure.

Figure RES-01
2015-16 Proposition 1 (Water Bond) Expenditure Plan
(Dollars in Millions)

<i>Bond Investment Category</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Safe Drinking Water	State Water Resources Control Board	Wastewater Treatment Projects	\$66.3
	State Water Resources Control Board	Safe Drinking Water in Small Disadvantaged Communities	\$69.2
Watershed Protection and Restoration	State Conservancies	Watershed Projects	\$83.5
	Wildlife Conservation Board	Enhanced Stream Flow Projects	\$38.9
	Santa Monica and San Gabriel Conservancies	Urban Rivers and Creeks	\$19.1
	Department of Fish and Wildlife	Watershed Restoration Projects (Non-Delta and In-Delta)	\$36.5
Regional Water Reliability	Department of Water Resources	Integrated Regional Water Management Program	\$32.8
	Department of Water Resources	Water Conservation	\$23.2
	State Water Resources Control Board	Stormwater Management	\$0.6
Water Storage	Department of Water Resources	Statewide Water System Operational Improvement	\$3.3
Water Recycling	Department of Water Resources	Water Recycling and Desalination	\$5.5
	State Water Resources Control Board	Water Recycling and Treatment Technology Projects	\$131.7
Groundwater Sustainability	Department of Water Resources	Groundwater Management Planning	\$21.3
	State Water Resources Control Board	Groundwater Contamination	\$0.6
Total			\$532.5

The Governor, in his 2015-16 budget, outlines a Proposition 1 expenditure plan that allocates a total of \$532.5 million to different state departments, with a 5 percent administrative cost cap included for Proposition 1 Bond funds. The above chart outlines the Governor’s proposed expenditures. Note that the Governor included a separate section on groundwater sustainability, allocating money to DWR for Groundwater Management Planning and the State Board for

groundwater cleanup. A complete summary of the Governor's proposed 2015-16 Budget proposal is available at <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/2015-16/BudgetSummary/BSS/BSS.html>

3. Changes in the Legislature

The statewide general election in November resulted in 27 new Assembly Members and 12 new Senators. The new Legislators for the 2015-16 Legislative Session were sworn in on December 1, 2014.

A special election was held on December 9, 2014 to elect a replacement for the 35th Senate District created by the resignation of Senator Rodrick Wright. Former Assemblymember Isadore Hall, III won the election with 55.9%; eliminating the need for a runoff election. Senator Hall was sworn in on December 10, 2014.

There are currently three vacant Senate Districts, the 7th, 21st, and 37th. These vacancies were created by the election of the Legislators to Congress. The special primary election for these three districts will be held on March 17, 2015 and the special general election on May 19, 2015.

With the start of a new Legislative Session comes new committee Chairs and committee assignments in both houses:

- Senate President pro Tem Kevin DeLeón appointed Senator Ricardo Lara as Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Bob Wieckowski as Chair of the Environmental Quality Committee, and reappointed Senator Fran Pavley as Chair of the Natural Resources and Water Committee.
- Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins appointed Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez as Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Assemblymember Das Williams as Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, Assemblymember Marc Levine as Chair of the Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee and reappointed Assemblymember Luis Alejo as Chair of the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee.

4. Governor Appointments

On January 2, 2015, Governor Brown reappointed Felicia Marcus as a member and Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board where she has served since 2012. This reappointment will require Senate confirmation.

5. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation

- The SGMA or "sigma" was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Brown in September. On January 1, 2015, the Act went into effect, turning a lot of the focus to the implementation of the Act. Information on SGMA legislation and implementation is available on a new State website <http://www.water.ca.gov/cagroundwater/>

- Under the Act, the bulk of the implementation work during the first few years will occur at the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Specifically, the DWR must update Bulletin 118, including the ranking of basins or sub-basins as a very low-, low-, medium-, or high-priority basin based on the threat to the basin's integrity. The Act required that DWR establish the initial groundwater basin prioritization by January 31, 2015, and DWR is using the current CASGEM prioritization, available at http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/SGM_BasinPriority.cfm DWR is also responsible for adopting regulations to revise basin boundaries and evaluate and implement the local groundwater sustainability plans.
- The Association of California Water Agencies is putting together a legislative proposal to address their 12 points to amend SGMA and working with Pavley. Understanding from Pavley (and the Governor) is that only ministerial fixes will be allowed in bill (SB20 – see below); ACWA may find another sponsor to do a more substantive bill.
- DWR Progress, Actions and Next Steps – working on principles for regulations for boundary determinations, then will have public process in March-April to develop regulations in fall. Next DWR will focus on principles for GSP requirements and evaluation of plans. DWR is reaching out to form Work Group for input.
- California Water Foundation conducted Workshops on GSA Formation in Tulare, Modesto, and Willows. The workshops began with intro remarks from County Supervisors, followed by a presentation by Kate Williams on SGMA, and then presented the case studies of considerations and steps the local agencies are doing to form GSA's including determining GSA boundaries. Each case study was followed by Q&A and then a full panel at the end with Q&A. These workshops were designed to focus on local issues and generate specific local discussions. All presentations are available at <http://www.acwa.com/sgma-workshop-presentations>

6. 2015 Groundwater-Related Legislation

- SB13 Pavley – Ministerial Changes to SGMA – Not very substantive language so far, as is Pavley's intent to limit the bill language and scope.
- SB20 Pavley – Well Logs – The bill would change current law making well logs confidential to making all well logs publically available, with DWR responsible for providing copies at a fee to anyone making a request for logs.
- SB 226 Pavley – SGMA – Water Rights - This bill would provide that it establishes a timely method for determining rights to groundwater in furtherance of the objectives of the act. This bill would require the process to be available to any court of competent jurisdiction. This bill would require

the boundaries of a basin to be as identified in Bulletin 118, unless other basin boundaries are established, as specified.

- SB228 – Cannella – Groundwater Storage – Beneficial Use - This bill would declare that the recharging of a groundwater basin by a local groundwater management agency or a local groundwater sustainability agency for the purposes of repelling saline intrusion and recovering basin groundwater levels constitutes a beneficial use of water if the recharge is consistent with the local agency's groundwater management plan or groundwater sustainability plan.
- AB307 - Mathis – This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to explicitly permit the usage of residential, commercial, and industrial groundwater for the recharge of a groundwater basin or aquifer.

Visit www.leginfo.ca.gov for more information and to follow legislative updates.

7. DWR New Items

- DWR's effort to develop an online system for water well drillers to submit well completion reports is available at www.water.ca.gov/oswcr
- The Department of Water Resources has launched a new Water Management Planning Tool (WMPT)
<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/boundaries.cfm>
The application is an interactive map that allows users to overlay various water management boundaries onto a map of California. This planning tool is intended to support local agency efforts related to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, California Water Plan, and Integrated Regional Water Management, and serve as an informational tool for all interested parties.

8. USGS Report – The Quality of the Nation's Water

The USGS recently released a new report on the nation's water quality, based on the last two decades of work by USGS scientists. The assessment included water quality in source (untreated) water from 6,600 wells in extensive regional aquifers that supply most of the groundwater pumped for the Nation's drinking water, irrigation, and other uses. The water quality sampling, along with detailed information on geology, hydrology, geochemistry, and chemical and water use, helps to explain the status and source of groundwater contamination, and how and why aquifer vulnerability to contamination varies across the Nation.
http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs_top_story/the-quality-of-the-nations-groundwater/